

State of South Dakota

EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2013

129U0805

HOUSE COMMEMORATION NO. 1063

Introduced by: Representatives Heinert, Bartling, Craig, Feickert, Feinstein, Haggar (Don), Haggar (Jenna), Hawks, Hawley, Hunhoff (Bernie), Kaiser, Kirschman, May, Mickelson, Parsley, Peterson, Ring, Schoenfish, Schrempp, Soli, Tyler, Verchio, and Wismer and Senators Sutton, Bradford, Frerichs, Lucas, and Welke

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Recognizing the fortieth anniversary of the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee.

WHEREAS, in February 1973, approximately two hundred Oglala Lakota and American Indian Movement supporters occupied the village of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation in protest of policies and activities of the tribal government, as well as incidents of violence against tribal members. The occupation and the subsequent siege by federal law enforcement personnel and tribal government supporters resulted in the deaths of two AIM supporters, numerous injuries on all sides, the destruction of much of the village of Wounded Knee, and additional violence in the following years; and

WHEREAS, the 71-day occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973 generated national and international notice and focused attention on grievances and issues far beyond the immediate causes of the occupation, including such areas as treaty rights and obligations, loss of land, poverty, unemployment, racism, use of natural resources, and indigenous rights. Over the years, these issues have continued to be debated and addressed at the state and federal levels; and

WHEREAS, the legacy of the occupation of Wounded Knee holds a conflicting mix of positive and negative impacts, and the passage of forty years has not diminished the level and intensity of the emotions, nor the degree of commitment and sacrifice by those persons, on all sides of the issue, who were associated with this event:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Eighty-Eighth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that the South Dakota Legislature recognizes the historical significance of the struggles that led to the 1973 occupation and siege of Wounded Knee and pledges its continued efforts toward the reconciliation of the differences between South Dakota's Native and non-Native communities, respect for the dignity and rights of our citizens, an understanding of and respect for the people and events that have gone before us, and the betterment of the lives of all of our people.